

## Winter Weather Safety Tips

Everyone is potentially at risk during winter storms. Most fatalities are indirectly related to the storm. People die from traffic accidents on icy roads, heart attacks while shoveling snow, and hypothermia from prolonged exposure to cold.

Be prepared for winter weather! Listen to NOAA weather radio or commercial radio/television to stay informed about winter storm watches, warnings and advisories.

At home and work, plan ahead for winter storms by having these in hand:

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Battery-powered NOAA weather Radio
- Extra food and water - high energy food such as dried fruit, nuts and granola bars, and food requiring no cooking or refrigeration
- Can opener
- Extra medicine and baby supplies
- First aid kit
- Heating fuel
- Emergency heat source
- Fire extinguisher
- Smoke alarm
- Make sure pets have plenty of food, water, and shelter

If you are already indoors during hazardous winter weather:

- Stay inside!
- When using alternate heat from a fireplace, wood stove, space heater, etc., use fire safeguards and proper ventilation
- Close off unneeded rooms
- Stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors
- Cover windows at night
- Eat and drink - food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat
- Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing

The best advice for traveling during forecasted winter conditions is; "simply stay at home". Only travel if necessary. However, if you must:

Before starting out in a vehicle:

- Plan your travel
- Check the weather
- Have road condition phone numbers handy
- Carry a Winter Storm Survival Kit
- Keep the gas tank near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines
- Avoid traveling alone
- Let someone know your timetable and route

If you are stranded in your vehicle during hazardous winter weather:

- Stay with your vehicle
- Take turns sleeping
- Run the motor every hour for 10 minutes to keep warm
- Keep windows open a little to prevent carbon monoxide buildup
- Make sure the exhaust pipe is not blocked
- Tie a bright cloth to the antenna
- Exercise periodically by vigorously moving your arms, legs, toes and fingers
- Turn on the dome light while the engine is running to aid rescuers at night
- After the snow stops falling, raise the car hood to indicate you need help

A good automobile Winter Safety Kit includes: cell phone and charger, blankets, flashlight and extra batteries, first-aid kit, knife, high-calorie non-perishable food, bottled water, extra clothing to keep dry, large empty can to use as emergency toilet, tissues and paper towels, small can and waterproof matches to melt snow for drinking water, sack of sand or cat litter for traction, shovel, windshield scraper and brush, tool kit, tow rope, battery booster cables, water container, compass and road maps.

Dress for the storm if you must be outdoors during severe winter weather:

- Wear loose, lightweight, warm clothes in layers
- Remove layers to avoid perspiration and subsequent chill
- Outer garments should be tightly woven, water repellent, and hooded.
- Wear a hat --half your body heat loss can be from the head.
- Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extreme cold.
- Mittens, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves.
- Try to stay dry

If you are caught outdoors during hazardous winter weather:

- DO NOT PANIC
- Find shelter
- Try to stay dry
- Cover all exposed body parts
- Build shelter: a lean-to, windbreak or snow cave for protection from the wind
- Build a fire for heat and to attract attention
- Place rocks around fire to absorb and reflect heat
- Melt snow for drinking water -- eating snow will lower your body temperature
- Avoid overexertion - especially when shoveling or freeing stuck vehicles

Being prepared for winter weather (just like all weather) starts at home:

"BE AWARE - BE PREPARED – MAKE A KIT"